"TOUCH NO UNCLEAN THING."

A LECTURE

ON THE

Right Attitude & Relation of the Church to the State at the present time.

BY THE

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(Delivered at the Request of the Young Men's Association.)

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Rev. J. A. Chancellor.

Rev. and dear Sir,

We, the Elders and Deacons of the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation, College Street South, Belfast, having heard with unmingled satisfaction a lecture delivered by you on the 2nd inst., in which you clearly defined the "Right Attitude and Relation of the Church to the Nations of the Earth," and in a most forcible and convincing manner defended the Scriptural and time-honored principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and believing that much good would result from the publication of the lecture at the present time, most respectfully request you, as our beloved pastor, to hand it to us for publication at as early a date as possible.

Signed on behalf of the Session,

PETER REYNOLDS, *Session Clerk.*

Signed on behalf of the Deacons,

WILLIAM EDGAR, *Secretary.*

"TOUCH NO UNCLEAN THING."

Isaiah LII. 1—12.

"Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord."—*Verse* 11.

IN what has been called the "Later Prophecies" of Isaiah, commencing at the fortieth chapter, the Prophet addresses himself exclusively to the pious and faithful remnant among the professed people of God. Having plainly announced, at the close of his "Earlier Prophecies," the Babylonish captivity, as the crowning calamity of that era of judgments, he takes his imagery and illustrations mainly from that event, when depicting analogous phases of the Church's prolonged spiritual captivity in after ages by the world-powers of the earth. The burden of all these prophetic discourses, of unequalled pathos and sublimity, is—"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Casting himself into the closing scenes of the captivity with that vivid and intense realization of distant events which peculiarly characterises his style, he addresses the believing but disconsolate captives by the rivers of Babylon, melting them into tears of deeper contrition, rousing them to heroic efforts of self-denial in confident anticipation of deliverance, and anon spreading out before their enraptured gaze far-reaching visions of glory to the Church, which not only embrace the brightest eras of her Messianic and millennial histories, but which melt grandly away into the endless light of heaven.

The passage before us exhibits some of the most striking peculiarities in the style of this evangelical prophet. As if living on the busy, glittering plains of Shinar during the last years of the captivity, and specially commissioned to prepare the exiles for immediate departure, he addresses to them the most pointed and vehement exhortations, and pictures their restoration as if it were just at hand. Yet while thus engrossed in the very crisis of a period of deepest interest to the chosen people, which had not begun until more than one hundred years after his death, the eye of the ecstatic seer is not for a moment confined within the range of a mere local and temporary deliverance. At every point it glances deep into the oft-repeating future, finding occasions for the renewed application of his message of so much vaster and more absorbing importance, that, in comparison, the Babylonish captivity, in its dark outlines and brightening exit, appears not as the ultimate fulfilment of the prediction, but

merely as a first instalment of its inexhaustible riches—a well-defined shadow and type of many similar and surpassing events in the Church of the future. By evolving distinctly the great truths and lessons contained in this chapter, we will readily discern their application to the times and events that are now passing over the Church in these isles of the ocean. The urgent and reiterated call to the captives, in which the whole section culminates—"Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing"—is amplified and addressed by an Apostle to all Christians who are mixed up in unholy alliance with unbelievers and idolators in the world. (2 Cor. vi. 14—17.) And in the Apocalypse, it is echoed again as the imperative call of God to all who are involved in any measure of subjection to the New Testament Babylon. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. xviii. 4.)

1. While under the control and power of a foreign and unfriendly government, the Church is here represented as lying in a state of deplorable bondage. Many of the Jews had secured positions of eminence and comfort in Babylon, accumulated property, and formed permanent alliances with the people of the land, so that they gradually forgot Jerusalem, ceased to be grieved for the affliction of Joseph, and declined to return. The interests and destinies of the Church are in nowise identified with them. But there were some, both among the priests and the people, who after seventy long years of banishment and oppression, still clung with undying attachment to the city of their solemnities, to whom the reproach of it never ceased to be a burden, and whose only reply to the bitter taunts and ridicule of their captors was the solemn asseveration—"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let the tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Jerusalem, the holy city, was formerly the joy of the whole earth, in their estimation; because the worship of the true God, which had its seat and centre there, was free, flourishing, and glorious. Now the humiliating spectacle is set before them of the virgin daughter of Zion sitting in the dust, enfeebled, stupefied, oppressed, with captive bands upon her neck, while the daughter of Babylon proudly occupies the throne. The people of the God of heaven are in the grasp and power of His enemies, His divinely appointed worship is subject to the control of worldly and idolatrous rulers. The sacred vessels of the sanctuary are set up as trophies in the house of their gods, while His "name continually every day is blasphemed." "And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter."

2. But attention is turned to this spectacle of distress only for the purpose of introducing the promise of a glorious deliverance. The promise bursts, like a rich and fragrant rose, out of the embrace of this rough and ungainly exterior. The passage is effulgent with glories

of redemption. "For the Lord will not forsake His people for His great name's sake: because it had pleased the Lord to make you His people." They had indeed rebelled against their heavenly King, and sold themselves to His enemies. By persistence in courses of unfaithfulness and iniquity they rejected His authority, forfeited His covenanted protection, and constrained him to give them up, in judgment, into the hands of the Chaldeans. "Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Having been sold for nothing, Jehovah holds Himself free to redeem them in a sovereign and gracious manner. No money could compensate for the dishonour done to His great name, and for the loss of happiness, spirituality, and freedom inflicted on His people by this captivity, and His own right hand will effect their deliverance.

3. This announcement of redemption is designed to rouse the Church from her fatal slumber and lethargy, and to stimulate to proper efforts for the achievement of her own deliverance. The daughter of Zion, crushed with a load of sorrow, stupefied with wrath, dazzled and awed with the golden magnificence of her captors, and heart-broken by the reproaches and cruel indifferenee of her friends, sits down, languid, hopeless, disconsolate, in the dust of Babylon. Goaded to the verge of frenzy by intolerable oppression, she has taken hold upon God at times in the fitful earnestness of despair, and exclaimed—"Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord: Awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old." Where there is prayer, there is hope. Such passionate wrestlings sufficiently prove that there is still power with God and with man, and that ultimately it shall prevail. The response from the throne on high is heard in the words before us:—"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem. Shake thyself from the dust; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." The knowledge that God had promised to deliver them, inspired them with the confidence and decision required in obeying these commands, and in asserting and realizing their heaven-chartered freedom.

4. But to incite them still more to earnest co-operation with God on this grand but critical occasion, the most blessed and precious results are described as following their restoration. Neither to God nor to the Church accrued any advantage from the captivity. The spirit of worldliness gained such mastery among the people, that numbers abandoned themselves to forbidden and polluting engagements, renounced every thought of freedom, and willingly consigned Jerusalem to ruins, and the name of God to everlasting reproach. Just as that captivity was prolonged, these results were intensified and increased. On the other hand, every blessing that religion produces is found rushing in the train of Zion's deliverance. The new-born spirit of freedom, like the genial breathings of Spring upon the earth, makes every form of life and beauty to burst forth at once with exuberant [illegible] What evidence of revival

and prosperity in the Church is most ardently desired—what token of Jehovah's presence and favour with His people are they accustomed to pray most fervently to obtain, that is not found springing up, as if by enchantment, around the path of the returning exiles. Rising nobly from the dust to stand once more in all the strength and beauty of covenanted grace, and spurning from her neck every trace and badge of earthly subjection as she marches forth from the allurements of Babylon into a wilderness, and into a land that is now sown only with ruins and decay, she presents a spectacle of celestial dignity and of faith which awes the world with reverence, and which statesmen and conquerors are not able to despise. "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them." Henceforth the courts of the Lord's house shall no more be trodden under foot by the uncircumcised, and polluted by the unclean. How beautiful and welcome upon the mountains shall be the feet of her busy messengers of peace, when the watchmen shall speak and sing together in the full-toned harmony of truth and love, because that at length they see eye to eye, in blessed fulfilment, that spiritual prosperity, independence, and unity which had long been promised to the Church. Then shall Jerusalem rise magnificently out of her ruins, and the waste places of Zion shall speedily "flourish like grass of the earth." Instead of the dark forecastings of unbelief, and the doleful predictions of worldly wisdom, the blessing of the Lord upon His rejoicing and dependent people shall produce such a sudden and unbounded revival as shall fill every heart with adoring wonder, and shall speed the glad tidings of salvation, as with lightning velocity, to the ends of the earth. "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations: and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

5. Blessed and glorious as these results are, they are made to depend not merely on the sovereign power and good-will of God, but likewise upon the Scriptural principles and moral character that shall be displayed by the exiles on the occasion of their departure. Those who remained in Babylon cut themselves off from all participation in the promised blessings. Those who came forth were taught that a full realization of them would depend, not so much upon the fact of their liberation, as upon the spirit and manner in which it would be accepted. They were to go forth before the heathen, not in a terror-stricken or tumultuous manner, but as the servants of the God of Heaven, in obedience to His supreme authority, scrupulously observing His commands, depending on Him alone for the future, and giving all the glory of their deliverance to His great name. To trample upon the Divine commandments for the sake of wordly gain, or shew any want of confidence in the all-sufficiency of His help, was to insult Him before the heathen, and thereby incur His displeasure. "For them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me

shall be lightly esteemed." Having secured their liberation by His influence on the heart of Cyrus, He summons them to depart, and joyfully resume their former freedom. The unusual urgency and iteration of this command points to the existence of great difficulties and discouragements, but at the same time warrants them in casting all consequences upon Him. The Priests and Levites, who were to bear back the vessels of the Lord, are required to cleanse themselves for the occasion, and are specially forbidden to touch any unclean thing, lest that thereby their hands should be defiled.

God had taken upon Himself the entire maintenance of the Priesthood. He had made them dependent on Himself alone. They were to have no inheritance among their brethren; the Lord alone was their inheritance. Being separated to the service of God, and dependent on His blessing continually for all spiritual success, it was necessary that such arrangements should be made as would best preserve them from the secularizing and engrossing influence of worldly pursuits, and from the danger of being seduced from their allegiance to God by looking to other quarters for their support. To guard against these dangers they were forbidden to have any part or inheritance with Israel. Their entire support came immediately from God. They were never placed in an attitude of slavish dependence on the people, much less on even godly civil rulers. Whatever was given for the priesthood must be first given to God. It thus became separated and holy. Then by Him it was given to His servants. His favour gave them success in their work, and thus secured the free and constant dedication of all that was needed for their outward maintenance. The wisdom of God is specially manifest in these arrangements. This extreme jealousy was required lest they should be drawn away from the attitude and relationship of entire dependence on Himself. Whatsoever was not first dedicated to Him, and thus rendered holy in accordance with His express injunctions, was to them an *unclean thing*. The hands that bore the vessels of the Lord were not to be reached out for State-assistance. Much less were they allowed to be extended in humble solicitation to worldly and idolatrous Governments for endowments, whose policy must have been to corrupt and separate them from God, and reduce them to a level with their own idol-priests. In coming out of Babylon they were commanded to shake their hands from the holding of bribes, and were forbidden even to touch the unclean thing. God's ministers must not be even suspected of infidelity to Him, or of participation in the sins of others.

That this is the principal reference in the words—*touch no unclean thing*, is sufficiently evident from the connexion. The clause is translated by an eminent German commentator (Dr. Delitzsch) "lay hold of no unclean thing;" and its meaning is thus pertinently expressed, "When they go out from Babylon they are not to enrich themselves with the property of their now subjugated oppressors, as was the case at the exodus from Egypt. It is to be a holy procession, at which they are to appear morally as well as corporeally unstained." The Priests were to carry back with them in triumph the vessels

of Jehovah. And the hands that bore them were not to touch, or carry hence anything that was unlawful or unclean. There was no danger of them carrying idols or idolatrous practices with them, for Cyrus and the Persians, at that time, were iconoclasts, as strongly opposed to the prevailing systems of idol worship as were the Jews. The only thing that the returning Levites were in danger of coveting and were at all likely to lay hold of, if permitted, was a portion of the overflowing and very desirable wealth of the Chaldeans. It was not unnatural for them to suppose that as they had been formerly robbed and oppressed, they were now entitled to carry back, in compensation, at least some portion of their own spoils. It might be argued that, as they were the servants of the God of Heaven, whose supremacy even Cyrus acknowledged, and as they had been deprived for many years of the large and honorable support which He had secured to them from the tithes of the whole land, and inasmuch as they had rendered no mean services to the King and to the commonwealth in promoting the peace, progress, morality, and enlightenment of the land of their sojourn, they were fairly entitled to large compensation for the past as well as liberal pensions or life-interests for the future. Such claims and such arguments, if laid before the liberal-minded, and munificent Prince who granted them their freedom, would no doubt have received prompt and generous consideration. But no permission is given for such a thing. Nay, as if contemplated, it is here positively forbidden. It had never been sanctioned by God that his Priests should receive assistance from such a source. Nor in this instance could personal compensation to any one be allowed. For their own sin they had been sentenced to banishment. Having sold themselves for nought they should be redeemed without money. All the spoiling, expatriation, and suffering they had endured was just and necessary as an expression of God's anger, and as a means of purging them for His service. In such circumstances God could not have sanctioned personal compensation to the Priests without violating His own law, nullifying His past procedure, and counteracting this great lesson of His retributive Providence before the nations.

This view is rendered still more certain by the repeated references to the exodus from Egypt. The precedent furnished on that occasion might have been taken by many to warrant a free appropriation of the spoils of Babylon, or at least to warrant a bold and persistent demand for a share in these spoils. The prophet is careful to indicate the striking contrast between these cases, lest any such result should unhappily follow. Jacob and his family went down into Egypt, at the invitation of Pharaoh, and with the full approval of God, to sojourn there for a time as guests. And while there they were innocently and treacherously reduced to slavery, and for a lengthened period systematically robbed and oppressed. Moved to compassion by their afflictions, the Covenant God of their fathers at length comes to set them free; and by a series of unparalleled miracles, compelled the men who had so basely cheated them of their

liberty to restore it again, and even to thrust them out to freedom. But will He accept bare freedom on their behalf, and permit their tyrants to retain all the riches which their enforced servitude had accumulated? Instead of being a demonstration of favour to His people, and of righteousness to their oppressors this would have been taken as an evidence of weakness. Not their freedom alone, but their earnings also, must be restored to them. The Egyptians evidently had an instinctive sense of the equity of this. So when, at the bidding of God, the Jews demanded, every one from his neighbour, silver, gold, and apparel, they were hastily granted, and "they spoiled the Egyptians." There was no taint of uncleanness or iniquity attaching to these spoils. They were the hard earnings of the people, at last handed over to them, with costs, by the decree of the highest court in the universe. And being their own, they were dedicated with acceptance to the service of God in the tabernacle. On the other hand, the Jews were sent to Babylon for sin, and their restoration was an act of sovereign mercy. To be spared as a nation and restored to the favour of God was all the inducement offered to their return. To have coveted the idolatrous possessions of the heathen, to have sought compensation for losses inflicted on account of sin, or to have shown an unwillingness to trust in their Covenant God and Deliverer for support in the future would have been wrong in itself, insulting to the character of God, and degrading to their own. Therefore the prophet exhorts them to embrace their offered liberty promptly and thankfully, for its own sake, to show no hankerings after the ill-gotten wealth of Babylon, and to touch nothing to which they could not plead a clear and Divinely sanctioned title—but to march forth with all the majesty of a holy character and of a world-subduing faith in God. "For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rereward."

But it will be said, how can the wealth of Babylon be reckoned an unclean thing, and the Priests directed not to touch it, when by the command of God it was, at that very time and afterwards, largely given and gladly received for His service? Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes did, indeed, by Imperial decrees make generous provision out of the revenue of the empire, and from the free-will offerings of the people, for the restoration of Jehovah's worship at Jerusalem. This fact is considered to be an ample vindication of the worst form in which endowments can be offered to the Church, and an argument is drawn from it to warrant the Church of Christ in maintaining alliance with, and receiving emoluments from, a State whatever may be its character, though at the same time it may be endowing Popery or have established Idolatry as the National Religion. As this is the only portion of God's Word that is supposed to furnish a precedent for such endowments as the British Government has been in the habit of giving, and as it is constantly and triumphantly resorted to on this account, it is necessary for us to examine its purport and bearings upon the subject. By a careful examination of the Edicts

which are cited in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah it will be found that nothing like the payment of grants to the ministers of God in compensation for losses, in lieu of tithes, in the form of pensions or life-interests, or in any other form whatever, is included in them, or even once mooted. Nor is there any example known to us in the Word of God of ministers of religion receiving National or Civil endowments from any State, whether religious or anti-religious. The question of stated national contributions directly to ministers for their own personal use does not once appear on the broad record of Revelation. As far as Scriptural precedent or example is concerned it is put at once and completely out of court. This is the question which we conceive to have been positively settled in the opposite direction by the command of God to the men who bore the vessels of the Sanctuary—"*Touch no unclean thing*"—and there is nothing in the Edicts of the Persian Kings to shake this interpretation. On the other hand, these Edicts explicitly declare that the one great object which they sought alone to accomplish was an outward and temporary object—the restoration of the Temple and its worship. "Cyrus the King made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem: Let the house be builded." Now, it may be right for a heathen Government, or for a Christian Government, to give, and for the Church to accept, grants for such a purpose as this, while it may be still unwarranted, and therefore wrong for the ministers of Jehovah to accept personal endowments from any Government. God has permitted the one, while He expressly forbids the other. But the conduct of these Persian Kings does not establish a universal rule even with regard to such outward matters as belong to the house of God. There was in their case an element of natural and inviolable righteousness, which for the sake of the house and glory of God it was necessary to maintain, and which imparts to this case somewhat of a special and exceptional character. The army of the Chaldeans had wantonly and wickedly destroyed the Temple and laid Jerusalem in ruins. The people and the priesthood, afflicted for their sins, could receive no remuneration. But that was no reason why God should not exact ample acknowledgment and reparation for the insults which had been offered to His house. These grants were a public testimony from his enemies to the supremacy and the righteousness of God.

This leads us to notice another prominent feature in these Edicts, of the greatest importance, but which has been pertinaciously overlooked. The moral character of a pecuniary donation, especially of a national or public kind—its cleanness or uncleanness in the judgment of God and of the Church, depends mainly upon the feeling from which it springs, and the design with which it is given. If it be free from the taint of known iniquity, and be dedicated to God in acknowledgment of His supremacy, to be expended in accordance with His will, then it is clean, and may be applied to any purpose, however holy. On the other hand, if there be manifest injustice involved in the making of the grant, or if, while ostensibly given to

the Church, it is not openly dedicated to God but given personally to ministers without authority from Him, to secure some worldly or political object, then it is unlawful and unclean, and can only breed confusion and unfaithfulness in the Church, turn away the face of God in anger from His people, and should be instantly rejected, from whatever quarter it may come. Now these Persian decrees bear upon their face the most explicit acknowledgment of the supremacy of the God of Israel, and all that is enacted in them is in simple obedience to His express commandment. Cyrus was designated by name to this work more than a century before he was born. He is "My Shepherd," "My anointed," and "the man that executeth my counsel;" "I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways; he shall build My city, and he shall let go My captives, not for price or reward, saith the Lord of hosts." Whatever may have been the relation in which Cyrus continued to stand to the Zoroastrian or Magian systems of the East, he and his successors, in their gifts to the Temple, act in declared obedience to the supreme commands of Heaven. "Thus saith Cyrus, King of Persia, The Lord God of Heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem." The decree of Artaxerxes shows that he felt there was retributive righteousness in this command, and the neglect of it might incur the displeasure of God: "Whatsoever is commanded by the God of Heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of Heaven; for why should there be wrath against the realm of the King and his sons?" If it could be shown that God had commanded these Kings to make provision for the maintenance of the priests, or to give life pensions or annuities to the prophets who had laboured in Babylon, then it would be inferred that similar grants might be given and received in all similar circumstances—although circumstances exactly similar are not likely often to recur. But all such grants stand conspicuous by their absence, both from the command of God and from the Edicts of the Princes, and, therefore, no warrant on their behalf can be extracted therefrom.

Thus it appears that the Persian donations were exclusively devoted to the restoration of the city and Temple-worship of Jehovah, which had been previously destroyed; and they were given, not on any worldly principle of compensation for "services rendered or losses sustained" by ministers, or for the accomplishment of any heathenish object, but in simple obedience to the sovereign decree of Heaven. It is very instructive to observe further, that all arrangements for the execution of these decrees were in exact accordance with the precepts and spirit of God's Word in regard to such matters. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." All they give, and all they do for His cause must be heartily dedicated as a free-will offering to Himself. He may prescribe the proportion of time, of money, or of service that is required for certain specific objects; but the fulfilment of such prescriptions must be free and cordial in order to be accepted as possessing a holy or religious character. God could not accept

enforced contributions from hostile and reluctant hands for the maintenance of His free and spiritual worship. Much less could he approve the use of such contributions if they had been exacted in a compulsory and iniquitous manner: "For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt-offering." In all such contributions there is an element of injustice which the Church, knowing the mind of God, should never be induced to sanction; and contact with which not only displeases God and spreads the deadly virus of unrighteousness and corruption in the Church, but is calculated utterly to damn her character in the estimation of the world. No such taint can be discovered in the offerings of the Persian Court. The Edicts abstain from enforcing even the return of the Jews. God commanded them to return: Cyrus gives them permission and encouragement. Although all that was required for the restoration of the Temple was immensely less than had been formerly taken from the Jews, yet the Edict contains no compulsory or inquisitorial clause, but appeals exclusively to the free-heartedness, which a mysterious regard for the glory of the God of Heaven had suddenly evoked throughout the provinces of the Empire. That which was obtained from the people, especially from the Jews remaining in Babylon, was to be "offered willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem." These Persian Kings have set a noble example to all who come after them, of doing for the Church not merely that which was right and just in itself, but precisely that which was Divinely commanded, and doing it in the very spirit and manner which is most in harmony with the character of God and the nature of His worship, and which He has uniformly approved. It would require to be shown that these Kings had exacted the contributions which were sent to Judea by Imperial taxation from idolators as well as from Monotheists and Jews over the whole realm, and that they were mostly given, not to God or to His house, but in annual instalments to the priests and prophets of the captivity to secure their continued fealty and subjection to the Empire, in order to extract therefrom a precedent and warrant for such endowments as are paid by the British Government at the present time.

The Church in Babylon, to the heaven-enlightened eye of the prophet, is like a captive woman, stripped of her beauty, shorn of her strength, sitting in the dust, dishonored and dejected, with captive bands about her neck. But the spouse of the heavenly bridegroom is not always to be left in that humiliating posture. Suddenly the gracious and reviving announcement is heard that "her redemption draweth nigh." To be prepared to meet it in a proper attitude and spirit, she is called upon to awake, arise, put on her strength, and stand ready for instant departure. Visions of peace and purity, of restoration and of glory the most transporting, are held out to animate her flagging hopes, and to give earnestness and decision to her efforts. But she is warned of the necessity of displaying calm and triumphant confidence in God if these visions of spiritual prosperity are ever to be realized. Especially are the priests

forbidden to pollute their hands with unholy gains or undedicated, and therefore forbidden offerings, as they bear forth the vessels of the Lord.

It is impossible to read these exquisitely glowing and beautiful visions of Isaiah and not feel that he is speaking to the Church of a great while to come. Nebuchadnezzar is a type of a much greater and more enduring oppressor. The sufferings and degradation inflicted on the Jews during their Chaldean exile are but faint shadows and prefigurations of immensely heavier and more prolonged calamities imposed upon the Church by the world-powers of the earth during the centuries that have succeeded. Nor has this state of bondage and oppression come to an end. The long dark night of captivity, though breaking here and there, and streaked with rays of brightening glory, has not terminated. Rome, Pagan and Papal, has proved herself to be Babylon's great antetype and successor, and has overshadowed her prototype from the first by the colossal vastness of her ambition, and by the unparalleled greatness and duration of her crimes. During the past eighteen hundred years she has been incessantly engaged, throughout the entire range of her vast dominions, in leading the Church of God into captivity and in killing her children with the sword. When her own power has failed in directly accomplishing the full measure of her tyrannical and bloodthirsty designs, she has got her fell purposes indirectly achieved by causing the nations of the earth to drink deeply "of the wine of the wrath of her fornication"—thus thoroughly imparting to them her own anti-Christian and intolerant disposition. Even after that a nation, like Britain, has openly cast off her yoke, she has yet succeeded by the prevalence of principles, institutions and traditions transmitted almost entirely unchanged from ages of Popish domination, and by the spirit of absolute ascendancy and innate defiance of Heaven's authority, under the pretence of priestly sanctity and infallibility which she has everywhere inculcated, in making it none the less effectively to do her own dark, relentless work of enthralling, persecuting, and degrading the Church of Christ within its bounds. In every country of Europe the Church has been seen for centuries sitting disconsolate in the dust of Babylon, loaded with fetters of iron, and overwhelmed with insults and with shame. Time after time she has been compelled to rise up and wage a desperate warfare, not for freedom or for honor merely, but even for bare existence, until every mountain peak, as it rises up to heaven in silent majesty, is made to bear monumental testimony to her heroic struggles, and every foot breadth of her territory has been soaked with blood. And when the Apocalypse of John unveils to our view, in life-like symbol and breathing portraiture, the agent and instigator of all this dire oppression, we read upon her forehead, in letters more glaring and unquenchable than ever flashed in the sun-blaze of Chaldea from the brazen gates and golden palaces of Babylon of old on the eyes of the former captivity, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

The visions of prophecy and the unrolled volumes of Providence perfectly harmonize. There is no Church in alliance with the State at this moment that does not sit in the dust of captivity and oppression. "To this hour she has never recovered that position in the world she held under the Theocracy. She has never been recognized as a distinct spiritual Kingdom in the earth. Free and uncontrolled scope has never been given her by the powers of the world for the exercise of that inherent Divine jurisdiction which she possesses under Christ her Head." Stunned by the avenging stroke of God, stupefied with the intoxicating cup of national apostacy, benumbed in every limb by the weight of her bondage, she sits paralyzed, self-abandoned, and almost unconscious of her degradation. Instead of the mountain of the Lord's house being established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills, we have the institutions of the Roman earth planting their feet, which are part of iron and part of clay, right upon the bosom of the Church, that thus they may maintain their exclusive supremacy and power. Instead of Kings and Queens bowing down to the Church with their face toward the earth and licking up the dust of her feet, we have the ministers and representatives of the Church reduced to a state of slavish inferiority and dependence, made to crouch and cringe in their presence, and for their own support made to lick up the dust of the feet of civil rulers. "How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" "The earth mourneth and languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits." The beauty that should attract and win back the nations to God is withered and scentless as a trodden flower. The strength that should subjugate kingdoms and lift up the lapsed millions from ruin, bearing them back to Christ, is made blindly and ignominiously "to grind in the prison-house" of the Philistines. The hands that should bless the nations, the feet that should run with the message of salvation, are paralyzed or enfeebled by the bands of earthly servitude and the glittering badges of sinful submission. And when God, who has the hearts of all men in His hands, stirs up the heart of a statesman, as he "stirred up the spirit of Cyrus King of Persia" to make proclamation throughout all the Kingdom that the bond may be free, "not for price nor reward," and that the captives may return to their own land—the dear fatherland of blood-bought independence and covenanted-freedom—how astounding and humiliating it is to find that instead of hailing the measure with devout exultation and calm confidence in God, they meet it only with such pitiful wailings of distress, and such fierce and bitter execrations as fill the whole regions of captivity with amazement and with shame. The burden of their bewildered lamentations is this—the Queen's Royal supremacy in the Church, "the brightest jewel in her crown," and "the stronghold of our spiritual freedom," will be lost—the Church, Protestantism, an open Bible, and all trace of national religion must perish, and Christ Himself as King of Nations, be crucified again—the ministers of religion will surely starve or be

reduced to the intolerable serfdom and degradation of dependence on Christ's own spiritual ordinance and people for their support—and the Church of the living God, expiring with the first full inhalation of that freedom, which is her glory and her very life, Popery, Infidelity, and every form and system of evil, shall take undisputed possession, and henceforth reign over the whole land! The iron furnace of Egypt seems at length to have kindled on the brain! The manacles have gone into their very soul! When called upon to arise and shake themselves from the dust, they lie more prostrate than before, clasping the very feet that now spurns them into freedom. When liberty is announced, they hug and kiss their chains with a fervency more frantic than ever. When summoned into the wilderness for a time, under the sole guidance and protection of the Church's Head—the true pillar of cloud and fire—that at length they may get triumphant possession of that glorious land which was given in covenant to their fathers, like the children of Israel, they "weep again," and exclaim, "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic. But now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all, besides this manna before our eyes."

This bring us face to face with the question—What is the right attitude of the Church towards the State at the present time, and what is the character of the relationship that should exist between them?

Well, we are sure at the outset, that the attitude now assumed by the Irish Established Church, and by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, with regard to the Government, *is not the right one.* The spirit of statesmen has been stirred up to disestablish and disendow them. This is to be done on the avowed principle of natural and universal justice between man and man, which has been so long outraged by these endowments that the sense of injustice has become so great that it is no longer endurable. There can be no real antagonism between the rights of God and the rights of man—between the true claims of the Church and the common interests of civil society. That monopoly which is not compatible with universal righteousness and freedom, must be founded on iniquity, and should be allowed to perish. Should the ministers of religion, for the sake of earthly interests, ever be found vindicating injustice, or palliating national oppression? Should the Church of God ever be placed in open conflict about wordly things with that deep sense of right and wrong which God has created in the breasts of all His rational creatures? Ministers of religion should ever be the first to expose national iniquity, and to demand its removal at whatever sacrifice of individual interests. But when the common voice of the nation indignantly demands the abolition of an establishment and endowments which have been identified with persecution and insufferable oppression in the past, and can only be maintained by the continued violation of conscience and the high-handed confiscation of indi-

vidual rights, for ministers to plead that the interests and the very existence of religion demand this sacrifice, that centuries of injustice have legalized their claims into sacred and inviolable rights that should never thenceforth be questioned, when they declare it is national spoliation, sacrilege, robbery of God, and rejection of Christ, to put a stop to indiscriminate taxation for the maintenance, not of religion at all, but of the ascendancy and endowment of a privileged politico-ecclesiastical caste—this is to expose the ministry to a measure of odium and suspicion they should never deserve, and to make religion itself to stink in the nostrils of worldly men. Is it consistent with the dignity and the proper influence of the ministerial office, with the high character for righteousness, and truth, and mercy which it should ever sustain, and with that calm reliance on the word of Christ—its Founder and its Head—for entire support, which is its glory and its strength, thus to stand, and thus to clamour at the present moment before the nation? If any question could be raised as to the inevitable bondage of the Church in alliance with an anti-Christian State, what melancholy evidence would be furnished here? Why this instinctive horror and dread of separation, as if the Church were but a rotten and leaky old vessel that will be sure to go down as soon as the State shall let her go? Why this persistent shrinking back from liberty as from a spectre of the past, even when thrust upon her by the fair-mindedness of statesmen—this intolerable anguish at the very thought of self-action and independence? Why all this boasting about loyalty and service to the State in the dignified capacity of a "moral police," as of articles of contract and of traffic? How is it that indiscriminate endowments, and vested interests, and commutation funds have assumed such infinite importance to the honor, and safety, and very existence of the Church of Christ? How is it that ministers do persist to the last in prostrating themselves before the guardians of the nation's purse, who can only despise such grasping worldliness on the part of spiritual men, and will still cling to the feet that have so often spurned them from their presence? Such things speak trumpet-tongued with regard to the nature and effects of national endowments in the past, and they hold out but scant hope of improvement in the future. Yet the decree has gone forth and cannot be reversed. "Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off."

The right attitude and relation of the Church to the State is *not necessarily one of separation and hostility*. Both are ordinances of God to man for good, adapted in infinite wisdom to the essential wants of human society and to each other, and should never clash together or be brought into hostile collision. They have it in their power at every point of contact immensely to befriend and assist each other; and when each is found doing its own proper work within its own proper range, in accordance with the all-regulating will and spirit of God, this must necessarily be the result. When the Church and the State, which should be co-ordinate and co-operative, but independent jurisdictions, come to be actuated alike by the mind of

Christ and controlled in all their movements by His hand there will be no want of perfect accord and harmony between them. The questions that are now to us so perplexing and involved will then naturally adjust themselves with the greatest readiness and simplicity, "for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." The whole power and influence of the Church of Christ should be constantly expended in promoting knowledge, righteousness, and holiness of the truest and most catholic, because of the divinest, stamp. These elements go directly to constitute the foundation, the enlargement, the strength, stability, and crowning magnificence of the civil edifice, and are therefore of inestimable advantage to the State. But the Church never thinks of selling such services for a material consideration. The very thought would eat like a worm into the healthfulness of her character and destroy it. They are the natural outgoings and efflorescence of her spiritual life, the glory that radiates from her presence, the lustre that sits like a royal diadem upon her benignant brow. In this manner the Church of Christ brings the blessings of prosperity, stability, and peace to every nation to which she comes, and in consequence "the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the Kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." True religion shall thus be acknowledged as the greatest of all blessings in the land, and shall be fostered and promoted in every suitable way. "And Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their Queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet." All that the most liberal and enlightened piety can prompt, or that the Word of God can be found to warrant, will be cheerfully done "by Kings and all who are in authority" to advance the interests and influence of the Church. But I have not yet found in precept or in prophecy, in the Old Testament or in the New, anything that would warrant or suggest the expectation, that ministers will become in any circumstances stipendiaries of the State, or be made dependent on the civil power rather than on the ordinance of Christ for their ordinary support. This opens up quite a different question. The necessary distinctness and independence of these two jurisdictions, the essential importance of securing untrammelled freedom for the servants of Christ, and that special divine legislation which amply provides for the support of the ministry in a way more in harmony with the nature of the Church and the exclusive Headship of her King seem to me to have settled it already in a sufficiently positive manner. The Church is as capable of independent existence and self-support as is the State. We believe the State will be no more called upon or permitted to take into its hands the support of the officers of the Church, than the Church will be called upon or permitted to have a hand in the appointment and support of the officers of the State. It is obvious that nations may bring their wealth and glory to the Church in such a way as never to suggest the thought that they wish to bring the ministers of Christ under control of the civil power, or to set aside His ordinance for their support as no longer necessary.

While reason and Scripture thus unite in testifying that Church and State should maintain the most friendly relations, and act together in harmony and holy emulation in promoting the true well-being of the nation, they are utterly silent when called upon to defend "*Church Establishments*," such as we see around us. The conflict thickens and rages around these establishments at present. Their advocates allege that the entire doctrine of the alliance of Church and State is involved in their maintenance. A civil or legal establishment of the exclusive claims of a State-selected Church, with national lands and large endowments to her ministers, are considered essential to any right relationship between them, and to a practical acknowledgment by either, of Christ's Headship over the nations. Now there is not a word in the Bible about such an establishment of the Church. We are told that her foundations are on the holy mountains, and that "the Highest Himself shall establish her." "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it." The spiritual ascendancy and eternal stability of the Church when seen aright by Statesmen shall attract and draw the homage and service of nations unto her. An adequate and honorable endowment is provided for her ministers from within the Church, and is secured to them by the presence and power of her ever living and omnipotent Head. Parliaments have it not within the range of their power either to disestablish or to disendow her. "Upon this rock," says Christ, "I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her." For the civil power to acknowledge the existence and transcendent value of the Church of Christ as a purely spiritual kingdom upon its territory, and to give legal effect, so far as it is competent for them, to her fundamental rights, laws, and privileges, and to promote, settle, and maintain, in every suitable way, her ordinances and interests– all this falls very far short of warranting the assumption of sufferance and superiority implied in the anomalous expression—a national establishment of the Church. With much more reason and show of Scripture authority might it be claimed that the Church had it in her power to establish the nation. The use of this phraseology, which is worldly and not scriptural in its origin, and has the offensive savour of latent Erastianism about it, should be abandoned by the Church. There is no such expression found in our National Covenants, in the Confession of Faith, or in the Testimony of the Church.

The right attitude of the Church to the State in all circumstances is that of PERFECT SPIRITUAL INDEPENDENCE, and no relationship should ever be entered into that would impinge upon, or in the least endanger it. This independence is simply the practical acknowledgment of Christ's sole headship and supremacy in the Church, and its maintenance is secured against all hostile forces by the fact that He is also Head over all things to the Church. These two Divine ordinances are distinct in every point of view, and never can be blended together without destroying the character and usefulness

of both. In their nature they are essentially different, and are not capable of amalgamation. "My kingdom," says Christ, "is not of this world." It has been specially contrived to meet the condition and wants of a fallen world. Originated in the infinite grace of God, chartered in the covenant of everlasting mercy, established and carried on by power which comes immediately from heaven, and aiming at results which lie beyond the range of secular government, it is *in this world, but not of it.* All its special objects and ordinances, its officers, and modes of action, the power which it wields, and the weapons it employs are entirely different from those of the civil government. Christ is, in a special and peculiar manner, Head of His body the Church, and her independence is essential alike to the glory of her Head, and to her own free vitality, development, and success. Loss of spiritual liberty is to her loss of spiritual life. To place her in subjection to the dominant influence and control of a worldly government, is to cramp and paralyze her limbs with fetters of slavery, to bend her lofty neck beneath the yoke of a foreign oppressor, and to make her noble free-born spirit pine away in anguish and sorrow. To assimilate her to the world is to destroy her very nature, and evoke in its stead a new creation of hierarchical pride, ritualistic magnificence, and spiritual death. Whenever the relation of Church and State involves the loss of distinctness and independence to either, results the very opposite of those which they were designed to promote are sure to follow such a mongrel and forbidden alliance. A worldly Church establishment where it has the power is sure to encroach upon the secular domain, to vault into the throne of Popish ascendancy over the State, and to wield the civil arm, oftentimes with a ferocity and blood-thirstiness which nothing but this relationship could explain, for the attainment of its own ambitious and cruel ends. On the other hand, when the State is in the ascendant, as since the great Protestant Reformation it generally has been, by the sheer weight and force of earthliness, it is just as certain to crush out the true life and spirituality of the Church, to inoculate her with a spirit and an ambition the very opposite to that of her Divine Master, to violate the purity of her fellowship and prostitute to the world the sacredness of her ordinances—in a word, to Erastianize her into a member or branch of the body politic, a mere ecclesiastical department of State. The fitting top-stone is placed on this process of transmutation and degradation when the State enacts and the Church submits to the supreme governorship of the civil power in all things ecclesiastical as well as civil.

So essential is this independence to the true existence and prosperity of the Church, that her Divine Head has made express and ample provision for its preservation in all circumstances, *by ordaining that by the Gospel alone her ministers shall be supported.* The independence of the Church is most easily and directly assailed through the ministry. It is often frivolously observed in this connexion, that although Christ's kingdom is not of the world, it is in it, and His ministers require an earthly support. That is a truism disputed by

no party. If Christ had made no provision for their support, then indeed the fact, taken in connexion with the general teaching of God's word as to the duty of nations, might have been supposed to sanction even civil endowments to the ministers of religion. But it should be specially noted, as an additional fact of the highest importance to the solution of this question, that Christ, as Head of the Church, has positively enacted that the support of His ministers shall come from within the Church. They are His ministers, and naturally their support should come from Him, and be under His exclusive control. They are spiritual office-bearers, and their support should be of a spiritual, not of a civil or secular character. Their labours are expended in the Church, and her members are required willingly to furnish, as a tribute to God and a testimony of their appreciation of spiritual blessings, the means of their support. God commands them to do this, and no external power or authority will ever be required to compel them to do what is so righteous in itself, and must ever commend itself to the hearts and consciences of the people of God, if ministers can be only satisfied with such a provision. Under the Jewish theocracy, tithes were prescribed by God as the right proportion of outward things to be devoted to His service, together with divers free-will offerings. But these were to be given voluntarily, first to God, and then to the Levites. Civil rulers had it in their power, when so minded, to exercise an influence in promoting or preventing the regular payment of tithes, but these were in no sense national offerings or civil endowments, and the Levites received them, not from the government, nor through its agency, but through the people from God. The same law has been substantially re-enacted in the Christian Church. "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the Temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." There is nothing said in the Bible of any other mode of ministerial support than this. Among the many glorious predictions of national homage and service to the Church, not one can be singled out that points unmistakably to ministerial endowments. "The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee"—freely imparting their very life-energy and influence, their affection and glory, to the Church; but it is a false, hierarchical, and constrained interpretation of these prophecies to represent ministers as nestling in the bosoms of kings and queens, and absorbing all their nourishment for their own support. Besides, how could the essential distinctness and independence of the Church ever be maintained if her ministers were seen to draw their support from the most friendly civil government? Would that State be considered in any respect free and independent whose ministers were reduced to the necessity of receiving annual subsidies from a neighbouring power? Would it be tolerated in any nation under heaven, that its ambassadors, or the officers of its army and navy, when in a state of war, should receive pensions and donations

from the foe? We know what sentence would be pronounced, in thunder-tones, by the British public, or by any other independent nation, if but a solitary instance of such conduct could be brought to light. And who then would dare to stand up and defend it? And shall the independence of the Church be less accounted of than that of the State?—the fealty of her ministers and the glory of her King than those of the civil power? With a true appreciation of all these points, the Westminster Confession of Faith, aiming to reflect the calm, clear, settled light of Scripture teaching rather than the confused and flickering rays of public opinion at the time, stretches to the very utmost the obligation of the civil magistrate towards the Church, but never once hints, in the most indirect manner, at the duty of giving civil endowments to the ministers of religion.

While thus it appears to us that "national endowments" and "ecclesiastical establishments" are forms of expression which have no warrant in the word of God, or in the standards of the Presbyterian Church, the present *endowments and establishments of the British Empire are in many respects highly objectionable and sinful.* If the spiritual independence of the Church must be maintained at all hazards, and in all circumstances, then she must be watchful and jealous not only as to the terms of her alliance with a Christian and friendly State, but she must remain *separate from all fellowship and participation with an Antichristian State.* By an Antichristian State, we mean one which opposes Christ, or gives any measure of countenance or support to the Antichrist. Now, the British Government not merely refuses to make any suitable acknowledgment of the supremacy and Word of Him "by whom kings reign and princes decree justice"—it legislates in many things in direct opposition to His Will, establishing iniquity by law—pretends not, even in its endowments to the ministry, to seek the glory of Christ and the good of His cause, and has in various ways established and endowed Popery, both at home and in the Colonies. Even by disestablishment, it means to make no concession to the authority or the claims of Christ. Its policy is the infidel one of indifference and neutrality. Either by "levelling up" or "levelling down," it is determined to put Christ and Antichrist on precisely the same national platform. But this is not all. The open hostility of the State to Christ, as Head of the Church, is made a fundamental principle of the Constitution—"an inherent prerogative of the Crown." Christ is not ignored merely, He is dethroned and ejected, and the crown of His Divine Headship placed on the head of the king or queen for the time being. All who acknowledge the Constitution by swearing the Oath of Allegiance, are held to acknowledge "the supremacy of our Lady the Queen, her heirs and successors, in all matters civil and ecclesiastical within this realm and other her Majesty's dominions." If the Queen be the real head of the national Church, then the ministers are her ministers, and she is bound to support them. This is the fountain out of which national endowments spring. In the endowments ordered by the Persian kings, we have seen that there was first a public acknow-

ledgment of the supremacy of the God of Israel; then scrupulous care was shown to devote them only to the objects which were commanded of God; and, in the third place, they were raised in the manner that was known to be most pleasing to His mind, and in accordance with the nature of religious gifts. In present British endowments, there is not only the absence, but the reverse of all these conditions. There is the thrusting away and denial of God's supremacy, and there is set up in its place the supremacy of a creature. Instead of being freely given to the Church, to be expended "after the will of your God," in building or beautifying His house, or in maintaining and extending His worship, they are given directly to ministers, without the authority of any Divine command, as if they were a body of State officials—moral police—servants of the Queen rather than of the God of heaven. And this money is raised by the force of an Imperial law, which excludes the exercise of any religious feeling or act of homage to God in its contribution, but which knowingly extorts it from unwilling hands in a way that violates the rights of conscience, and leaves nothing but a sense of robbery and injustice behind. "I, the Lord, hate robbery for burnt-offering." How can a Christian Church persuade herself that there is Scripture precedent or authority for such endowments? On what principle could the Most High be supposed to approve of them? Or on what principle could they be expected to prove a blessing, and not a curse, to the Church that receives them? To sanction such endowments by their acceptance is to sanction the Antichristian constitution from which they flow, the unrighteous manner in which they are exacted, and the infidel principle on which they are bestowed. These endowments, which if heartily and honestly dedicated to God might be of so much service to His cause, like the sweet waters of the Nile after they were changed into blood, have such a dark red tinge, and are so rank with the odour of corruption, that it is no wonder they are found to produce loathing, sickliness, and revulsion wherever they go. The call of God is now as loud and peremptory to those who receive them, as it was to the Jews in Babylon:—"Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord."

But the mask under which it is sought just now, to defend these endowments, is a most fulsome profession of regard for the great doctrine of *Christ's Headship over the Nations*. The real merits of the question are ignored or winked at, as not capable of vindication; and in speeches and resolutions in public meetings and Church courts the the stress is laid upon the *duty of the State* to recognise Christ as King, and to support the Church. The duty of the State and the duty of the Church are two distinct questions. Here the responsibility and identity of the Church seem to be entirely surrendered to the conscience of the State. The Headship of Christ over the nations is made to swallow up His Headship over the Church. The obligation resting on civil rulers is assumed to free the Church from the responsibility of forming and acting on her own independent judgment. This is

the very essence of Erastianism. That will be, indeed, a blessed day when the nations shall acknowledge Christ, and practically submit to His authority. Then shall great voices in heaven be heard, saying—"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." But the argument before us assumes that this mighty change has taken place already—that it has been embodied all along in the most perfect manner in the Irish Established Church and *Regium Donum*—and that their proposed removal will be the destruction of all national religion—the dethronement of Christ as King of nations. Now, we might ask—When did the nation, as such, first recognise Christ, and offer public homage to His supremacy? Was it when Henry the Eighth, his heirs and successors, were invested with all the powers which the Pope had exercised in the English Church, and declared to be the only supreme Head, both in Church and State, within these realms? Were the frequent and bloody persecutions of Puritans and Covenanters since that time, in which thousands and thousands of God's dear saints were barbarously immolated on the altar of this Protestant-Papacy, the natural fruits and outworking of this great doctrine of Christ's Headship over the nations? Was it as a result of this doctrine that the nation first rescinded and then deliberately reversed the Scriptural Covenants they had sworn—saying, of the Lord and his Anointed, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us?" Is it as an act of special homage to Christ as King that Prelacy and Presbyterianism, Unitarianism and Popery, are all endowed, and to be all perpetuated, so far as the grant of public money can secure that result, in this distracted and unhappy country? Have we arrived at the Millennium, as far as national homage to Christ is concerned, if these endowments could be only increased and continued? Ministers of the Gospel and Church courts acting in the name of Christ strive to make that impression when they vindicate their own participation in these grants, on the ground that they are given in accordance with the duty of the nation, and the promises and predictions of God to the Church! For these principles, they tell us, their fathers bled and died.

> "Shrine of the mighty! can it be
> That *this* is all remains of thee?"

Bringing out the long-neglected old banner with the memorable inscription, "*For Christ's Crown and Covenant*," they fiercely shake out its dusty folds in defence of Prelacy, Popery, and indiscriminate endowments. But trying, in this dramatic and despairing fashion, to conjure up the spirits of the mighty dead, will bring no more encouragement to their cause than Saul obtained when he resorted to Endor that Samuel might be brought up, and he said, "Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord—therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day." It was under the torn and blood-stained folds of that glorious and imperishable banner that the Covenanters left the best Establishment the world has ever seen, with

its manses and glebe lands, its indulgences and endowments, and on the bare mountains, and bleak morasses, and shaggy wilds of Scotland maintained their testimony for the crown-rights and Covenanted supremacy of Christ, in defiance of the Government. Under the same banner their successors remain separate to the present day, refusing to touch any unclean thing that would involve them in participation with the sins of the nation, and witnessing none other things than those that the martyrs and confessors have witnessed before them. And now is this honored flag to be rudely snatched from their grasp and waved in defence of the Queen's supremacy, infidel endowments, and the perpetuation of Maynooth? Are we to be seriously told by Presbyterian ministers that the withdrawal of these endowments is to rob the Redeemer of His crown-rights and His Covenanted inheritance in these lands? Is this all the conception they have of what is due to the eternal Son of God as King of Nations—of what that testimony was for which the martyrs of the Covenant shed their blood, and of what it is in the power of a reformed and Christian nation to do for the advancement of the cause of Christ, and of truth and righteousness in the land? "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph." For ministers openly to diffuse such sentiments, for the Church to make such impressions on the rulers of a State that once engaged in Covenant to be wholly, only, and for ever the Lord's and then quickly turned aside, is to be guilty of an amount of indiscretion or of treachery that we tremble to contemplate. So true is it that "A gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous." "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!"

If Christ were in reality acknowledged as supreme Governor of this nation, then His word would be consulted and respected in all national proceedings. No longer would there be any objection, on the part of rulers or people, to swear allegiance to Him. Everything in the constitution and administration that is contrary to His will, everything that is opposed to the interests of truth, morality, and universal justice, would be immediately removed. All the institutions of the country would be placed in open subjection to His authority; its princes and rulers would set the example of bowing down before Him to do Him homage. Whatever influence or aid the State might be disposed to tender to the Church, whatever endowments it might place at her disposal, it would be, as in the case of the Persian Princes, in obedience to the expressed command of the King of nations. There would be no wish to overbear the independence of her courts or the freedom of her ministers. Would a nation that had the least regard for Christ ever think of expelling Him from the Church, and setting up as head a sinful mortal in His place? Would such a nation expend its resources for the support of

Antichrist or the spread of deadly error? To do the very things that Christ has forbidden, and to refuse to do any of the things which He has commanded, is not the kind of acknowledgment that should merit the full approval of His friends. The "vested rights" of ministers in the endowments of such a State may demand the continuance of this state of things, but the glory of Christ, the promises of His word, and the best interests of the nation, demand a speedy and absolute change. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is, and I will give it to Him." "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The relations which subsist between Church and State in Britain *involve both parties in sin.* The Church, whose high and solemn vocation it is to be a faithful witness for Christ, and whose testimony should be borne against all sin, is guilty of virtually condoning and approving the sins of the nation. The burden of her present testimony is that the State is doing its duty to Christ, and fulfilling the predictions of His word—that there is nothing so very Antichristian in its character and actings, in the favour which it shows to Popery, in the ascendancy it has conferred on Prelacy, in its removal of the Sabbath law, and its open contempt for the name and authority of God, as to require a bold and absolute condemnation from the Church, or to necessitate separation, at the cost of endowment. The loud and emphatic declaration from the Church to the nation is, that all these evils had better be continued for ever as they are, than that ministers should be deprived of their bounty. Are they not manifestly making themselves partakers, by such conduct, of the sins of the nation? Is not this to be guilty of winking at and condoning public iniquity, and thereby perpetuating what ought to be destroyed? If the Churches continue in this course, when will the State be led to see and acknowledge its sin, and to bring the King back to His rightful seat of supremacy and dominion? While thus unfaithful to Christ and the admitted claims of His kingdom on the rulers of the earth, can it be expected that they will be privileged to enjoy the full favour and blessing of Him who comes, "having salvation"? Impossible! "The Lord is with you while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you." Just in proportion as Churches involve themselves in the iniquities of the land, so must they experience the hidings of God's face, the withholding of His Spirit. This explains to us the lamentable prevalence of spiritual deadness and decay. The nation that expends millions on Church Establishments has secured in return but little moral prosperity. As the wealth of the people increases, there is a corresponding increase of ignorance and profanity, of pauperism and crime. With the immense resources, zeal, activity, and patriotism of God's people in all Churches, error and wickedness abound, and society in many respects is waxing worse and worse. Does not the arm of the Lord seem as if it were shortened, so that He could not save, and His ear heavy that He cannot hear? Are not the heavens above our heads like brass, and

the earth beneath our feet like iron? And when the question is asked, "Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say—Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers. For they went and served other gods, whom He had not given unto them: And the anger of the Lord was kindled against the land."

That all alliance between the Church and the British Government must prove injurious to the spirituality and independence of the former will be apparent from an examination of the nature of these alliances. "*The Church of England and Ireland*" has been long established as the National Church. She has enjoyed the highest advantages that State connexion can confer. Many of God's children, prayerful, devoted, and influential, are ranked among her membership and in her ministry. Now that disestablishment has become imminent in Ireland—which has always been the purest branch of the Church—What is the spectacle she presents before the world? A true and living Church, conscious of an inseparable relationship to Christ, with "the noble army of martyrs and confessors" ever marshalled before her view, should sustain no humiliating recoil from the bare thought of separation from the State. It is not like the rupturing of a lawful marriage, or the amputation of a living limb. That Church, which is the body of Christ, is independent of the State, and in her best and most prosperous days stood forth perfectly separate. Nothing daunted by the frequent treachery of friends, the unslumbering hate and fiery rage of open persecutors, and by the colossal strength of an idolatrous empire continually in arms against her, for three hundred years after her Apostolic organization, she maintained the battle of independence and spiritual aggression until the Roman world lay conquered at her feet. During the past three hundred years the Established Church in Ireland, with every advantages that Royal favour, undisputed ascendancy, unbounded wealth, and the whole country mapped out, and for weal or woe, committed to her hands, could confer, has succeeded only in embittering the minds of Romanists instead of converting them, in provoking the Romish Hierarchy to a fierce and deadly struggle for political dominion, and in convincing the majority of the nation that there is nothing purely religious identified with that Establishment to make it worthy of preservation. Nor has she succeeded during all that time in amassing so much spiritual strength and vigour as to enable her calmly to undertake the duties of self-government and independent action. Her alliance with the State has been a disaster and a crime. She has been treated all along as an earthly institution, a vassal of the State, an appanage and instrument of political domination. Her own life-consciousness and deepest intuitions accord perfectly with this view of her relative position—

> "Or, whence this secret dread, and inward horror
> Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul
> Back on herself, and startles at destruction?"

The language of one of her own Oxford Professors, published in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review*, is stronger than we would choose to employ. "The Church of England," he says, "is an institution created by the law, and it is nothing else whatever. Everything which constitutes it a Society, is law made. The actual dominion of the law over every part of the Church is a fact patent to every eye, and absolutely indisputable. A lay officer, the head of the State, the Crown, is supreme over the whole Church. It judges every ecclesiastical cause and every spiritual person by a State Court, called the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The opinions of any clergyman, the declarations of any bishop, the resolutions of the whole clerical body in Convocation, are destitute of all authority before the Privy Council. To the Crown, as advised by this court, every ecclesiastical person, every doctrine, every heresy, every part of the Church's worship, ritual, and discipline is subject. The legal status of the Church is its only status. Let every law about it be repealed; its former members will then become a collection of unassociated Christians with a few ordained persons among them. If it be said that the laws enacted by the State are not the only laws of the Church of England, then I ask where are those other laws to be found? in what code are they written? by what sanction are they enforced? who has pledged himself to obey them? No doubt it is painful to conceive the Church reduced to such anarchy. But this disagreeable spectacle must be faced, if we desire to know what the disestablishment of the Church will produce. I am not developing theory; I am reciting facts—facts as certain and as stubborn as any realities in this world." These indubitable facts, thus honestly avowed, explain to us the present condition and past history of this Church. A stream rises no higher than its source. An effect cannot be different in its nature and character from its cause. Henry VIII. might create a rich Church Establishment, prescribe its faith, appoint its clerical constitution and ordinances of worship, and determine who shall be its members. But could we expect a spiritual Church, a holy membership, a Scriptural worship, an Apostolic clergy, a pure and heavenly faith from such hands as his? "They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them." Every man in the community, however wicked and scandalous, is reckoned in law a member of that Church—made by baptism a child of God and heir of heaven, and buried in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life. It is considered her peculiar distinction and glory, that there is room enough in this ark for all manner of beasts, clean and unclean; that she affords ample refuge for fugitives from every quarter under heaven—Socinian, Popish, and Presbyterian; that every form and grade of doctrine, from the rankest Popery to the most blatant infidelity, may nestle together under the well-fledged wings of this national Church. Possessing not so much as one single law or ordinance by the sole authority of her heavenly King, having not an instinct or tradition of independent spiritual existence, is it to be wondered at that she shudders at the very

thought of separation from the State? Although actually thrust out of Egypt and burdened with enormous spoils, to the greater part of which she can plead no manner of Divine warrant, yet she cannot be persuaded to accept of freedom, and would move heaven and earth to prevent the dread catastrophe. Her incessant and agonizing cry is, "Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians; for it is better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness." And if, astonished at so much vociferation, one should ask the question, "What aileth thee?" the answer may be given in the words of Micah, "Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away; and what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee!"

The case of the *Presbyterian Endowment*, known as *Regium Donum*, is very different. Here we have endowment without the slightest recognition of the Scriptural constitution and faith of the body. That it is the duty of the magistrate to acknowledge and honor the Church of Christ cannot be questioned. The Confession of Faith, while enlarging on this duty, makes no mention of endowment as included therein. But here is the strange and unprecedented anomaly of endowment where there is no recognition. The Irish Presbyterian Church has never been distinctly acknowledged by the State as a Church at all. She has no place in the constitution—no legal status whatever. As a body of men, an influential section of the community holding peculiar views of Church government, she is acknowledged, but not as a Church. The position and claims of the Presbyterian Church are not only ignored by the State—they are repudiated and denied. She is considered an intruder, and an alien in the land—a mere offshoot from the Scotch Establishment, that has no right to a place on Irish soil. If she be not still persecuted as aforetime, and commanded under pains and penalties to conform—if she is now legally "tolerated," and a bounty voted to her ministers, that is all the length the State can constitutionally go. There cannot be two suns in the firmament at once. The State cannot recognise and establish Prelacy and Presbytery at the same time. Any national grant or favour extended to the latter can have for its object nothing more than to reconcile its adherents to the humiliation of being reckoned a mere voluntary society existing by sufferance outside the National Church. For a Church to accept endowment to her ministers from a State that refuses to acknowledge the ordination of these ministers, or her own ecclesiastical existence and status, is to endorse with her own hand the sentence of degradation that has gone forth against her. To brave persecution may be the highest honor; but to be pensioned off, as an unwarranted sect, can be only disgrace. It is to acknowledge the exclusive position of national ascendancy and recognition assigned to an opposing Chnrch, and humbly to accept the only position that remains to them in the estimation of the State, for the sake of such crumbs as may fall from the rich man's table. The standing, the success, the glory of a Church, do not depend on national recognition. The Church has often existed and flourished

beneath the frowns of statesmen and the ban of Papal or Prelatical excommunication. When a true Scriptural Church exists in a land, it is, no doubt, the duty of the State, and may be to the advantage of religion, to recognise her Scriptural constitution, and give legal effect to her administration. But if the State refuses such recognition—and by virtue of its exclusive relationship to another Church it is bound to refuse it—while it tolerates and endows her in some other very different and dubious character, is it not thereby guilty of stripping her of rights as a Church of Christ, and affixing a brand of inferiority upon her brow? Should she value the endowment of ministers above her own Divine rank and standing as a free Church, constituted by Christ, and existing by virtue of the authority and power of her exalted Head? This is the true philosophy of *Regium Donum*. It is the price paid by the nation to Presbyterian ministers for consenting to dispense with recognition as a Church that Prelacy may retain the ascendancy. Hence the attempts made to defend it are seldom made on religious or ecclesiastical grounds, but on the ground of "services rendered and losses sustained" other than those which belong to the proper business and calling of a Church. Ministers may be, and no doubt are, useful as "moral police," and render at all times invaluable service to the Government for which the payment of *Regium Donum* may be a most inadequate and beggarly acknowledgment; but, in all honesty and righteousness, that sort of payment should be acknowledged not as a religious endowment, or gift to the Church, but as "secret service money," paid to an admirable band of moral policemen, and general educators of society. Presbyterian ministers are not known to the State in their true character and dignity at all; and we fancy it will be difficult to prove from the Word of God that the ministers of Christ should accept endowment in any other capacity. Is the Church reduced to that condition that she can no longer support the ministry, for their own sake, and at their own proper work, without forcing them to occupy such a dubious position as this?

The whole *history of Regium Donum* confirms this view of its character and design. Some of the Scottish ministers, who accompanied the first settlers in Ulster, were permitted to officiate in the parish churches which were vacant, and to draw the emoluments of the Irish Establishment "by a comprehension and connivance dictated by the necessity of the times." How far they identified themselves with an Establishment which their avowed principles condemned, we are not required to say at present. But it is plain that they could have no legal standing in that Establishment, or title to its endowments, without publicly abandoning their Presbyterianism and submitting to the dictation of the Bishops. So soon as the authorities were in circumstances to execute the law, they were compelled either to conform to Prelacy, or were driven, with ignominy and violence, out of the Establishment. This temporary and indefensible appropriation of tithes and privileges to which they had no legal title could furnish no after claim on the Government for com-

pensation or *Regium Donum.* With more reason it was construed by the Government as a ground of suspicion, and watchful jealousy against them in the future. When Charles II. was restored, Prelacy was immediately set up again as the Established Church of the nation. That was understood by all parties to mean that no legal place was henceforth to be found for Presbyterians in Ulster, though they sought it carefully with tears. "A little after," says Adair, "bishops were named for all the vacant dioceses. And immediately they set up their public liturgy, altars, bishops' courts, and fell with all haste to crush faithful ministers, and plant the churches with what others they could get, and to extinguish the remainder of Presbyterian government. Jeremy Taylor, the Bishop of Down, did, in one day, declare thirty-six churches vacant. He did not make any process against the ministers, nor suspend or excommunicate, but he simply *held them not to be ministers*, they not being ordained by bishops. In the hour of temptation, a few, embracing this present world, renounced the Covenant and their Ordination by the Presbytery, and were re-ordained by the bishop. The Parliament put forth a declaration or proclamation, forbidding all to preach who would not conform. Upon this they were all forced to desist from public preaching." They did not renounce their ministry at the bidding of Prelacy; they merely ceased to exercise it in a public manner. If they did not fully obey men, neither did they obey God in this matter. They obeyed man so far as to cease publicly obeying God, and fulfilling the vows they had taken to Christ as their King and Head. The State "held them not to be ministers," and they accepted this verdict of national degradation, yielded to the Prelates, and ceased to exercise their ministry by the sole authority of Christ, in the face of the Government. The very Thermopylæ of Presbyterian independence and freedom in the British Empire was then entrusted to their keeping. They were the very first whose spiritual independence as ministers of Christ was assailed and insulted by the Supremacy of the Crown. The flag that is now so dramatically flaunted by Presbyterian ministers in defence of Supremacy and the Establishment, should then have been solemnly unfurled as the rallying point for the witnesses of Jesus; and at that critical time they should have shown themselves prepared to march forth as the vanguard, or, if necessary, as the forlorn hope of the Reformation cause, to the fields, to the mountains, or even to death—"FOR CHRIST, HIS CROWN, AND HIS COVENANT." A firm and undaunted stand at that time for the Headship of Christ and the independence of the ministry might have arrested at its breach the flood of persecution that was soon to desolate the land, reversed the whole system of retrogression that had been inaugurated, and more than anticipated the Revolution. Christ and posterity would have blessed them for such a noble stand, and their names would have been immortalized with those, "Who, through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in

fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." But, alas, in the day of battle, they turned back and kept not the Covenant of God. When a testimony for Christ's Supremacy was demanded, they remained silent, exercised their ministry only in secret, made great protestations of loyalty to the throne, and carefully abstained from giving offence to the Bishops.

From that time we date the origin and separate organization of the COVENANTING CHURCH IN IRELAND. Three ministers, scorning this policy of ignoble silence and faithless submission, went forth, under the frowns and frequent censures of the rest of the brethren, and dared to brave the utmost rage of Prelatic intolerance and power for the sacred right of preaching the Gospel. Nor were they left without sympathizing and warm-hearted followers. "They called the people," writes Adair, "to solemn and great meetings, sometimes in the night and sometimes in the day, in solitary places, whither people in great abundance and with great alacrity flocked to them. There they spoke much against the bishops and the times. The people not only countenanced and called them up, but liberally contributed for them. The rest of the ministers were counted timorous cowards, and all they did was nothing, because they went not to the hills." These men, deserted and discarded by their more prudent, but less noble brethren, were soon compelled to flee to Scotland, where two of them inscribed their names on the imperishable roll of martyrs, as they fought and fell for the work of a Covenanted Reformation under the shadow of the Pentlands, on the bloody slope of Rullion Green. From that time to this Ulster has never been without a distinct band of public witnesses for all that is included in the Crown and Covenant of Christ. A small, despised, and often times misrepresented and ill-treated band it has been. But through every change and every trial it has continued unbroken until this day, testifying for, and illustrating as far as was in their power the prerogatives of Christ and the inalienable freedom and independence of His Church. Though few, they have never despaired. Though despised and reproached they have maintained their position, I trust, with some measure of dignity and respect both for the principles they hold, and for the Master whom they follow. Though poor, as might be expected, they have never found it necessary to go a begging to the Government that disowns them, as it has disowned their Master, either for permission to live, or for the means of living. Their motto has been, and until Christ is fully recognized will still continue to be, "NO SURRENDER!"

From that same time must be dated also the origin of *Regium Donum*. King Charles II. had very considerable trouble with his recusant and insubordinate subjects both in England and Scotland. Many of them had to be fined, imprisoned, banished, and put to death. The temper of the Scottish people was so unbending, and the position assumed by the Covenanters there was so defiant and threatening, that even Charles could not but be sensible of the great debt he owed to the Irish Presbyterian Ministers, who had been, to

use his own words, so "loyal, and peaceable in their way and carriage, notwithstanding the hardships they were under." And so of his great kindness and "singular favour" he orders a suitable pension to be paid to them. The law held them to be no ministers, and had just ejected them from their charges, forbidding them to preach. But under such trying circumstances their submissiveness has been so exemplary that he rewards it with a Royal gift. On the list of *Pensions* and *Annuities* for the year 1672 the grant appears for the first time, and is thus described, "*For secret services without account, £600.*" These words authoritatively define the origin and intention of the *Regium Donum*. It was an acknowledgment of the service which the Presbyterian ministers rendered the Government by their great quiescence and singular resignation when deprived of their ministry and standing as a Church at the instance of the Irish Establishment. The self-willed and incorrigible Scotch were giving his Majesty no little trouble, and putting him to very considerable expense, in chasing, imprisoning, torturing, and killing them, because they would not quietly resign themselves in the same peaceable and loyal manner to spiritual thraldom and self-degradation. He saw no prospect of success in Scotland but by continuing the work of persecution to its bloody end—till the disaffected had been all exterminated, or the country turned into a hunting-field. The Irish ministers relieved and delighted his Royal soul by their instant and courteous submission when "*simply held not to be ministers.*" And as he naturally calculated that they would soon all die out and leave no successors behind them to trouble the land, he kindly ordered them to be provided for on the List of Pensions and Annuities.

It would be tedious and unprofitable to trace further the history of *Regium Donum*. The stream has never risen higher than the fountain from which it sprung. Would any one venture to say that Charles II. was doing homage to Christ the King of nations, and fulfilling the bright predictions of Scripture by bringing his riches and glory into the Church, when he pensioned the ministers of Ulster for their ready unfaithfulness to Christ, and the valuable services they had thereby rendered to his persecuting government? When William III. renewed the grant, it was still in acknowledgment "of the peaceable and dutiful temper—the losses and the loyalty," of these ministers. And although afterwards changed and increased from time to time, it was never put on any higher or different basis than that of continued loyalty and dependence on the British Throne. Now, if the Government chooses to pay men for loyalty, peaceableness, and good behaviour, we have no objection. But it is very suspicious looking, and we would think very offensive, to single out Presbyterian ministers as the only men to whom the price of such conduct should be paid. Is their loyalty alone of the kind that must be purchased? But while receiving compensation for "services rendered and losses sustained," let it not be pretended that this is the sort of duty which nations owe to Christ as their King, and that to withdraw this grant is to rob the Redeemer of His crown-rights and of His glory.

We rejoice that God has at length put it into the hearts of statesmen to propose a sweeping measure of disestablishment and disendowment. Our only regret is that it is not much more sweeping and thorough than it promises to be. If it had embraced all the ecclesiastical establishments of the empire, and swept from the statute-book every trace of their existence, with the exception of such modified life-interests as would appear to be equitable and necessary, we had been much better satisfied. In the meantime, we thank God and take courage. The faithful testimonies of God's despised witnesses are now coming into effect. In fearful works in righteousness God has been responding to those prayers, and groans, and sighs which two centuries ago, and often since—

> "The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
> To heaven."

Good men are interested in these Establishments, and praying for their continuance. They are willing to admit some of their evils, and are doing all they can to infuse into them a better spirit and have them reformed. But from their very nature and constitution, they are incapable of reform and must be removed. Being called into existence by the Royal Supremacy in spiritual matters, when that is removed they fall into dissolution. Radically wrong, they must be radically changed. The Irish Establishment created, administered, and upheld by the crown of an earthly monarch, must be taken away that the crown may flourish on the head of Christ. The Church held fast in the grave-clothes and bandages, of a lengthened interment, must be disinterred, that she may at length go forth in her pristine freedom and beauty, and become Divinely established in the land. Let religion but gain the ascendancy in the hearts and minds of the people, let it regulate the acts of legislators, and sit enthroned in the affections of kings, then shall we speedily find it rising to its proper place of national ascendancy—established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills. Then shall the Church shine forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." In the meantime, we hail the rude, noisy, darksome breaking-up of an icy winter, as an unmistakable indication of the presence of Spring, and a harbinger of the long looked-for, long promised Summer of our world. The Lord hasten it in His time.

The Presbyterian endowment never having been given as an act of homage to Christ, but in compensation for their non-recognition as a Church, and as ministers of Christ, should be instantly and indignantly rejected as an unclean thing. We are sorry it has to be taken from them. They should have shaken their hands free of it long ago. This would have been their glory and their strength. Whatever may be said, in seriousness or sarcasm, on its behalf, its influence upon all parties concerned has been only evil, and that continually. It has operated as a foreign and disturbing force on the minds of ministers, detaching them sadly from their people, and tending to draw them too much away from close and constant dependence on their spiritual

King. It has chilled and alienated the generous instincts and affections of the people, freezing up at the spring the fountains of their liberality, and preventing them from having their ministers in their hearts, to live and die with them. It has injured the State as well as the Church—encouraging it in its worldly and Antichristian policy, confirming it in the low and insulting estimate at which it holds the Church of Christ, and affording it an occasion and pretext for the endowment of Maynooth, and of Unitarianism, as a separate body. Presbyterian ministers often boast that as this money is now given without expressed conditions, it can have no influence upon their spiritual freedom. They are free, they tell us, as the winds of heaven. They must be thinking only of the trade winds, which always blow in the same direction. They are free as the planets which always follow the attraction of the most ponderous body within their range. They have been always free to accept the grant, with whatever conditions the Government has been pleased to connect it—never free to give it up. The only fault they have found in it is, that it is so small. When their rejection of it would have prevented the grant to Maynooth, which is now perpetuated, and to the Unitarian body, still they had no freedom to do anything but ask for an increase of *Regium Donum*. Even now, when it is to be taken from them, they are not free to let it go with any appearance of self-respect—nor free to depend on Christ for their support, or to commit themselves boldly to the intelligence and love of their people for the future. Nor are they free to lift up an honest and united testimony at the present time for truths for which the martyrs willingly died, and which they have always protested to be of the highest importance. If they really wished to put an end to the National sin of spreading and maintaining Popery and other forms of error by public funds, would they not have accepted the challenge thrown out by one of the Trustees of Maynooth in Parliament, and have said at last—rather no endowment at all than the endowment of the least rag of Popery, which is the Antichrist of Rome? Could they be silent at the present moment as to the evils of the Prelatic Establishment, when the attention of the Empire is called to the matter, if the *Regium Donum* had left them free and unfettered? Prelacy is discovered to be not so unscriptural and oppressive a system after all but that it might be better to continue its establishment in perpetuity, than to lose the *Regium Donum*. Although held from the first *to be no ministers*, and their Church "made as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things unto this day," they now stand forward as volunteers to do battle for that Establishment, and to denounce terrible wrath and retribution on all who would pull it down. When Gideon threw down the altar of Baal, and built in its place an altar to the Lord, the men of the city indignantly demanded that he should be given up to them for punishment. "And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? If he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar." What will be the judgment of posterity when it is considered

that the Presbyterian Church, for the sake of *Regium Donum*, has been so directly accessory to the advancement and continuance of Prelacy, Popery, and Unitarianism in the land? Even now that judgment might be arrested. Let them out of regard for the glory of Christ, and the honor and independence of the Church, cast from them at last the unclean thing. Let them voluntarily free themselves, before it be too late, of all participation in the sins of nation. Let them present to an unbelieving world another impressive illustration of a Church strong in the faith of God's Word, following the guidance of an invisible Head, and fearlessly confiding to His promised aid her entire support. Let them rouse the Scriptural intelligence, and rally round themselves the best sympathies and affections of their people by such a noble act of self-sacrifice for principle and for Christ. It will be life from the dead to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland—the grandest revival of true religion ever known in her history. When they come to stand by the dark rushing waters of earthly discouragements and trials it will be found that the mantle of their fathers has fallen upon them; and as they smite the waters and exclaim—"Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" the Jordan will be parted hither and thither, that they may pass over. "For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rereward."